

Worldwide dotcom re-evaluations

 By [Naseem Javed](#)

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The digital world is passing through the eye of the needle and domain name expansion is forcing all kinds on adjustments and re-alignments to cope with name identity survival.

The big question of today is what will happen to the current inventory of millions of dotcom domain names in speculative trade and private holdings all over the world? What are the best ways to sift out the best names and eliminate waste to make room for the brand new opportunities emerging from the new top level domain names called gTLDs?

On one side there are 1930 gTLDs names, each applied with ICANN for an average cost of a million dollars and the other are the millions of fancy and odd shod domain names in the speculative trade being held back for the highest bidders - which may become useless very soon. Here are the new challenges for branding and positioning of name identities.

The appetite for long 3-4-5 words dotcom names 'myfabulousitalianfurniturestore.com' is over. Sensible, two word names have some chance, for example, 'cheapbargains.com', but not something like 'zebrahotdogs.com' which causes confusion. On the other hand, single word names are still worth a lot, provided they are logical and safely useable, for example 'telephonic.com' but not 'zuquveusr.com' or 'chuirox.com'.

Become naming experts

By now, the gTLD race has sent a clear signal to the entire domain name industry: "either become naming experts with good knowledge of the trademark laws and corporate nomenclature or stand in line behind the trademark attorneys".

Speculative domain name portfolios, surrounded by unlimited naming options will now have to be more about logical choice selection with hassle-free usability to cope with trademark issues.

However, well balanced, good quality dotcom names will have a rapid boost in additional value during the dot name aftermarket.

There are two reasons, firstly, the initial confusion over the simultaneous glut of name combinations, and secondly, delays in approvals of desired and pending name approvals. Furthermore, to re-orient the global mindshare away from the extreme simplicity of 'dotcom' to new mix-match-jambalaya naming will take some time. Front page breaking news stories of success or massive conflicts will always boost the awareness. In the long run the dot name aftermarket will settle down and start to enjoy the long-term benefits of domain name expansion. The future looks brighter and full of pleasant surprises.

Four stages: Dotcom portfolio re-evaluation

1. The classification

All the dotcom domain name portfolios, including all the other first generation gTLDs like 'info' or 'biz', must be reviewed to determine styles, types and personalities of names. All names should carefully and professionally be classified into either Gold, Silver, and Bronze categories.

This phase should provide big picture assessment, ratios and balances among three types of classes. As most portfolios have been assembled via random impulses this classification process provides a reality check.

2. The name by name evaluation

Each high-potential name must be ranked and reviewed under the rules of corporate nomenclature, alpha-structure, phonetics, connotations, secondary meaning, possible trademark advantages or conflicts, languages, translations, ease of use, type-ability, marketing potential and most importantly, memorability. This compilation provides rationale for pricing - especially in last minute negotiations.

At this stage all names should be ranked from 1 star for being very good to 5 stars for being excellent. The 542 generic dictionary word gTLDs will be evaluated and its name by name ranking will be released later this month by [ABC Namebank](#). The earlier observations pointed to too many poorly selected names. Hot topics will be how these gTLDs will fare in the global market place, as well as what their real value based on the rules of naming will be.

3. Special name evaluations - winners

For the top winners an advance level name evaluation process must be applied. The deliverable of this professional analysis must result in a minimum 2000 word report. Such reports are important for buyers and their management to make rational and good decisions. Such reports can make a huge difference in adding one or a few extra zeros to the selling price.

4. Domain name sale negotiations

This phase of negotiations is always very tricky. It is better to have a professional third party handle this - especially when the buyer is engaged in heavy internal discussions and searching for solid justification based on corporate nomenclature knowledge, trademarks and other marketing issues. To consummate the deal, at the right price, especially when the buyer has other parties and other naming options on the table, a nomenclature based assessment with authoritative knowledge becomes critical.

Recommendations

Check out all your domain names for their obvious and hidden powers and evaluate their importance based on ICANN gTLD overflow. The topic requires high level literacy on the global naming understanding, so become an expert fast.

The future appears very bright for nimble ideas with global potential as new domain name expansion will open very cheap and very powerful tools for global marketing and branding. The game changers have already landed - the question is what are you going to do about it?

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